

NEW MEXICO INTEGRATED  
WATER MANAGEMENT  
WORKSHOP  
JULY 14 – 17, 2008  
ALBUQUERQUE

Field day at the  
Larry Sanchez farm  
near Belen, NM



**Larry Sanchez practices irrigation water management (IWM), crop rotation, cover cropping, nutrient and pest management, residue management. This field currently has a soil organic matter above 2%.**





**Participants were given an overview of Mr. Sanchez's farming operation and methodology. Presenters included Mr. Sanchez, Clarence Chavez, Rudy Garcia, Mauro Herrera, and Dave Fischer.**



**Clarence Chavez speaks about soil layers, soil pH and no-till farming.  
This soil tested to a pH of just above 8.**



**An infiltrometer was placed in the field demonstrating how the soil texture has an effect on the speed of infiltration.**





**A tensiometer was installed in the field to measure the soil moisture below the surface. Tensiometers are made in varying lengths.**



**Mauro also measured the electrical conductivity of the soil with an Ec meter. This soil tested to 0.4Ec, an indicator of excellent soil quality.**



**The group visited a concrete Hi-flow turnout which will irrigate this 5 acre field in about 1 hour. Rudy Garcia points out features of the turnout.**



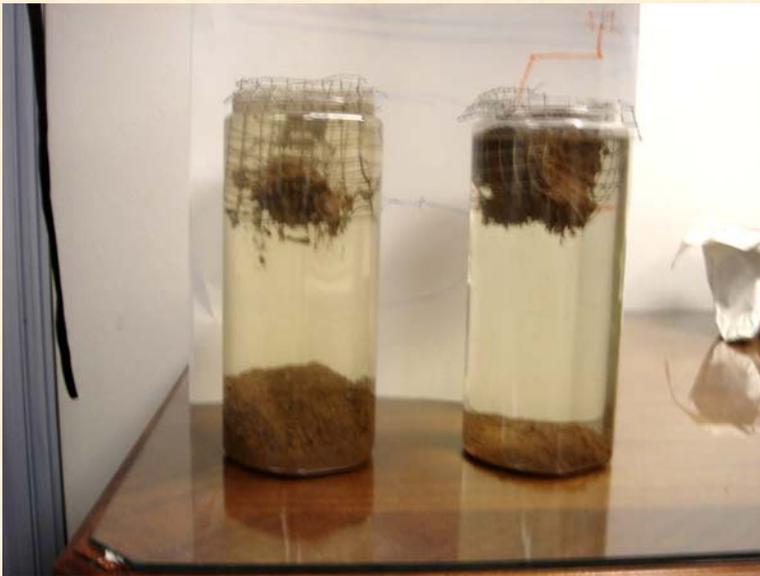


**Next was a trip to the USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Center in Los Lunas, NM. Dr. Ron Walser spoke about sprinkler irrigation in the orchard and cover cropping between rows. In the photo to the right he is using white clover which is beneficial for pollinators. Walser then showed the vegetable gardens which are drip irrigated.**





**Soil quality – Two samples from the Sanchez farm were compared by immersion in water, on the left from the edge of the field (no improvement to soil quality) and on the right from inside the field with beneficial management practices applied. Sanchez also practices the judicious use of soil amendments such as manure, compost, gypsum, etc. The soil on the right held together, even after 24 hours submersed in the water, indicating aggregate strength and exceptional soil quality.**



# Lessons Learned

Soil quality can be improved substantially by management practices listed below:

- **✦ No-till**
- ✦ Crop rotations**
- ✦ Cover crops**
- ✦ IWM**
- ✦ Nutrient Management**
- ✦ Integrated Pest Management**
- ✦ soil amendments - manure, compost, gypsum, etc.**

**Mr. Sanchez remains committed to producing high quality crops and the continued use of these practices. Our thanks to him and the team that conducted this field day.**